



Mr. *Walter's*
SERMON,
TO THE
Anniversary Convention
OF
MINISTERS,

Met at *Boston*, May 30. 1723.





*Faithfulness in the Ministry,
Derived from CHRIST.*

A
SERMON,

Offer'd to an Assembly
OF

MINISTERS,

From several Parts of

New-England,

At their Anniversary Convention

In *Boston*, May 30. 1723. *R*

By **Rehemiah Walter, A. M.**

And Pastor of a Church in *Roxbury*.

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SERMON

On the

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At the Anniversary Conference

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By the Rev. J. J. ...

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London

CHAS. ...

*Faithfulness in the Ministry,
Derived from C H R I S T.*

I T I M. I. 12.

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Ministry.

THE Conversion of Paul, with his Call to the Office of an Apostle, seems to have been the most glorious instance of the Irresistible and Sovereign Grace of Jesus Christ. When therefore that very violent *Persecutor* of Jesus Christ, became a most zealous *Preacher* of Christ, it was the Wonder of all that knew him, both Believers and Unbelievers. It is said, Acts. 9. 21. *All who heard him, both good and bad, were amazed, and said, is not this he that destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief Priests?* And again, it is said, Gal. 1. 22, 23, 24. *The Churches in Judaea which were in Christ, when they heard, that he which Persecuted*

Persecuted them in times past, now Preached the Faith which he once destroyed, they glorified God in him, i. e. for that Wonderful Change wrought in him.

BUT none, upon this account, so much admired and glorified GOD our Saviour, as the Apostle *Paul* himself did. Upon all proper occasions, he did, with a transported Soul, publish and praise the Power and Grace of Jesus Christ whereof he had such signal experience. In that Paragraph of Scripture which now lies before us, he very particularly sets forth as he terms it, the *superabounding* of the Grace of Christ, towards such a Capital Sinner as he had been. And then he breaks forth into a rapture of Praise to Jesus Christ on the Account thereof.

THE Words of our Text are the beginning of this his most grateful Recognition of the Grace and Kindness of Jesus Christ towards him. And therein he gives thanks to Jesus Christ for two things.

1. *FOR putting him into the Ministry:* The Ministry is a general Name comprehending in it every Function in the Church of Christ. Here it especially means the *Apostleship*, which is stiled a Ministry, *Acts* 1. 25. Though this was the highest Office in the Gospel-Church, yet it was a Ministry, not a domination. In the discharge of it, the Flock of Christ was to be Ministred to, not Lorded over. Into this high and holy Office, *Paul* was put by Jesus Christ Himself, and that after His Ascension into Heaven. For this he gives Thanks, as also,

2. *FOR*

2. *FOR making him Faithful in His Work.* Jesus Christ Counted him Faithful. Not that He found him so, but made him so. And that by *enabling* him. The Original Word is a Compound Verb signifying an *inward* Strengthening, by such an Efficacy and Influence as reach the very Soul in an immediate manner. Such an Effectual and Powerful Work of Christ as this, the Apostle had experience of upon his own Spirit, to which he ascribes his fidelity in his Office, and for which he gives Thanks to Jesus Christ. As the Words are *Eucharistical*, I shall consider them under the Application of the Doctrine; which may be this —

IT is the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who Enables His Ministers, unto the Faithful Discharge of their Duty.

WHAT our Duty is, was largely and faithfully set before us on the last Occasion of this Nature. I design at this time, only to lead up our Thoughts to the Fountain, from whence all Power is Derived and Conveyed to us, for the Faithful performance of our Duty. And this may be done under Two Propositions.

PROP. I. *THE Ministers of JESUS CHRIST are not able of themselves Faithfully to Discharge their Duty.* This is a Truth supposed and implied in the Text. Consider Christ's Ministers in themselves, and there is nothing with
them.

them, but Weakness and Insufficiency for so great a Work. Separate Christ from them, and they can do nothing as they ought to do. John 15. 5. *Without me, ye can do nothing.* In themselves there is a Total Inability, unto the fulfilling of the Work of the Ministry, in a due and faithful manner. For the Proof of this, I need do no more than produce the undissembled acknowledgments of Self-insufficiency made by the Apostle *Paul*. We find him upon all Occasions confessing his own utter insufficiency to his Ministerial Work. Thus, 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of GOD, who also hath made us Able Ministers of the New Testament.* No Words can be more expressive of Self-insufficiency. He takes in himself with the other Ministers of the Gospel, and professes that neither they, nor he, were sufficient as of themselves to think any thing. He was not of himself capable of raising in his Mind so much as one good thought. Thus he speaks of his own Incapacity, not in a Way of feigned Modesty, but godly Sincerity. Again, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me.* No sooner had he mentioned his much superior Labours to those of the rest of the Apostles, but he immediately subjoins, *yet not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me.* He wholly disclaims them as the Effects of his own sufficiency, and ascribes them entirely to the Concomitant Grace of GOD. From these Places,

ces, not to name others which will hereafter occur, it is most evident, that this holy Apostle was under a deep sense and apprehension of his own total Self-insufficiency unto the Discharge of the Duty of his Ministry. Now let us a little consider who he was, that makes this open and repeated Confession of his own Insufficiency. He was one, perhaps, not second to any meer Man. One, who before his Conversion, was a Person of great parts, learning and moral accomplishments. One, who was miraculously and immediately called by Jesus Christ Himself from Heaven. One, that was taken up into Paradise, into the third Heaven. One, that was abundantly furnished with extraordinary and supernatural Endowments of Mind.

THIS is he, who declares that he was not sufficient as of himself to do that Work whereunto he was called. And if he durst not pretend to a self sufficiency, none will do so, but such as swell with cursed Pelagian pride. Christ's Ministers then cannot of themselves faithfully discharge the Duty of their Ministry. Wherefore,

PROP. II. *IT is JESUS CHRIST, who Enables them unto the Faithful Discharge of their Duty.* From Him, and from Him alone, comes all their help and ability. And it comes from Him, not simply considered as GOD: For so, Sinners, as we all are, can no more receive Grace and Strength immediately from the Son, than from the Father. Nor does it come

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from

Faithfulness in the Ministry;

from Jesus Christ meerly considered as *God-Man*. For still, Sin stands as a Bar in the way of all Communications of Grace to us. It therefore comes from Jesus Christ considered as *God-Man invested with the Office of a Mediator*. In the Execution of this Office, He satisfies for sin, and so removes that Obstacle out of the way; and also purchases all Grace for us, and dispenses it to us. By His Mediation He opens the Divine Fountain of Power, and so conveys strength to us by the Holy Spirit. Hence the holy enabling Spirit of Christ, comes in pursuance and by means of Christ's Intercession. Joh. 14. 16, 17. *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.* The Son of God Incarnate, in the discharge of His Mediatory Office, is then the helper of His Ministers. Their Redeemer is their strength. And He thus enables them three ways,

1. *By conferring upon them those Sanctifying Gifts and Graces, which lay the Foundation of their fitness for the faithful Discharge of their Duty.* Without a Participation in such Gifts and Graces there can be no performing the Work of the Ministry with *Faithfulness*. For we cannot suppose those to be faithful Ministers of the Gospel, who, (to say no more) have not the least exercise of sincere Love to Christ or the Souls of Men in the whole course of their Ministry. Now, this fundamental Qualification for Ministerial Faithfulness, is from the Lord Jesus Christ. All Grace is from Him,
not

not meerly as a Channel thro' which 'tis conveyed to us, but as a Fountain from whence it flows down unto us. He is the Head from whom all Life and Grace is communicated to the Church which is His Body. Out of that *fulness which is in Him, they do all receive, and Grace for Grace*, Joh. i. 16. Not properly in a way of *transfusion*, as if that numerical Grace which is inherent in Christ, did pass from Him into us, which is not possible: but in a way of powerful Operation, effectually working in us by His Holy Spirit, the same kind of Graces, with those created Graces in His Humane Nature. Jesus Christ has a fulness of Mediatorial Power, whereby He sends forth the Holy Spirit, by whom He makes Application of His Purchased Gifts and Graces to them that are His: for Christ communicates all Grace by His Spirit. And thus Jesus Christ bestows Graces and Gifts on His Ministers, whereby they are *habitually* fitted and enabled, for the doing their duty faithfully. By His Spirit He renews and sanctifies them, endows them with spiritual knowledge and wisdom, and all such Graces, as dispose them to and render them capable of fidelity in their work. All that Grace, which any in the Church of God, whether Publick Officers or Private Christians, do partake of, they receive it all from Jesus Christ. Eph. 4.7. *But unto every one of us is given Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* Jesus Christ bestows it on them and works it in them by the Holy Spirit, which proceeds from Him, and is sent by Him for that end, and with whom

He does co-operate in that blessed work, inas-much as the power whereby it is effected is the same in Him, and in the Holy Spirit.

2. *BT Increasing those Gifts and Graces in them, whereby they are more and more fitted for the Faithful Discharge of their Duty.* Christ's Ministers cannot of themselves make the least addition to the Graces they have received. All their spiritual growth is from Jesus Christ alone. As the foundation, so the superstructure of Grace, is from Him. 'Tis he that edifies them in all their gracious Qualifications for their Work, and that by His Holy Spirit. Thus when Christ was about to ascend into Heaven, He told His Apostles that they should *receive power after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them*, Acts i. 8. i. e. They should receive greater power and ability unto the Discharge of their Duty, by a Collation of greater measures of Gifts and Graces than they had before. And accordingly we find, that after the Holy Ghost made His descent upon them, their knowledge, faith, zeal, courage, patience, &c. were wonderfully increased. As the branches do grow by more plentiful Communications of sap to them from the root; so do Faithful Ministers and Christians grow by a more plentiful Communication of the Spirit to them by Jesus Christ. By that blessed Spirit they are made more knowing, wise, meek, patient, spiritual and heavenly, and so are better capacitated for their Duty.

3. *BT*

3. *BT constant Communications of special Assistance unto the due Exercise of those Gifts and Graces, wherein Faithfulness does Consist.* Ministerial Faithfulness consists in a vigorous use and improvement of Ministerial Gifts and Graces. He is a good and faithful Servant, who well employs the Talents which he has received, *Mat. 25.* Now, without special aids from Jesus Christ, Gospel-Ministers cannot so improve the Talents committed to them. Their Gifts and Graces, if unassisted by the Spirit of Christ, will not exert themselves, nor bring forth any good fruits. Though there be a power to act in Grace received, yet it can do nothing unless excited and actuated by the Holy Spirit of Christ. As there is a living power and disposition in the branch to bear fruit, yet it does not put forth it self, but by sap communicated to it from the root. Ministers then do need the Grace of Christ to be with them, as well as in them, in order unto faithfulness. Jesus Christ therefore does grant unto them supernatural influences and assistances, whereby they are enabled, not only to do Duties, but to do them *well.* *He strengthens them with might, by his Spirit in the inner man,* *Eph. 3. 16.* By the strengthening influences of the Holy Spirit, the habits of Grace infused, are made to act powerfully and vigorously in the way of Duty.

HERE I might descend to a particular enumeration of the various Duties required of Ministers, and show how Jesus Christ by the vouchsafements of assisting Grace, does enable them

them thereunto. But I shall only single out a few of the principal of them.

1. *JESUS CHRIST Enables them to bear in a right manner all their Trials and Sufferings.* The Faithful Servants of Christ in the Ministry, are usually the Subjects of manifold and great Afflictions. Sometimes they are exercised with bodily infirmities and pains, *1 Tim. 5. 23.* Sometimes they labour under wants and poverty, *Rev. 2. 9.* Sometimes they are reproached and reviled, *1 Tim. 4. 10.* Sometimes they are grievously persecuted by the Men of this World, *Mat. 5. 12.* A brief Catalogue of their Sufferings the Holy Apostle Paul gives us, in *1 Cor. 4. 11, 12, 13.* *Even unto this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labour working with our own hands, are reviled, persecuted, defamed, and made as the filth of the world, and as the off-scouring of all things to this day.*

NOW, whatever kind of Sufferings Christ's Faithful Ministers do undergo, they commonly bear them with patience, and many times, with much contentment and cheerfulness of Spirit. But who is it that enables them thus to do? 'Tis Jesus Christ alone. When the Apostle Paul had declared that he knew how to behave himself a-right both in prosperity and adversity, he presently tells us that he could not do this of himself, but only through the assisting Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Phil. 4. 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* So when he was brought to
answer

answer for himself before Nero, all Men forsook him, being afraid to appear in his Defence before that cruel and bloody Emperor. Being left under these discouraging circumstances, he was in great danger of being dispirited, overwhelmed and ruined, yet he managed his Cause with courage, success, and safety. But whence was this, not from himself, but from Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 4.17. *Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching of the Gospel might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles in the Pagan Court might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion.*

2. JESUS CHRIST Enables them to resist and overcome their Temptations. Christ's Faithful Ministers shall be no strangers to Temptation. They may expect in a peculiar manner to be assaulted by the powers of Hell. For, their great Work and Business is, to pull down the Kingdom of Satan, and to erect the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. No wonder therefore if he cast his fiery darts at them and pursue them with his hellish suggestions. Sometimes he may be permitted to tempt them to the most dreadful and horrible things, as hard thoughts of God, of Christ and Religion, yea, to infidelity itself. But oftentimes they are tempted to unfaithfulness in their Office, by sloth, flattery, partiality, &c. Such Temptations as these, besides what are common to them with all Christians, they may be exercised with. Now He that gives them strength to withstand and conquer these Temptations, is the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He in his own Person

Person engaged in a combat with the Tempter; and that for this end, among others, that He might know how to succour them that are tempted, *Heb. 2. 18.* From his own experience of the violence of Satan's Temptations, He is more fitted and inclined to afford assistance to his tempted Servants. And it is through the sufficiency of His Grace and Strength that they are made able to stand in the hour of Temptation. *2 Cor. 12. 9. His strength is made perfect in their weakness.* 'Tis not by their own power that they get victory over Satan, but by the *power of his might,* *Eph. 6. 10.* If the most eminent Ministers of Christ were left to themselves, they would become a very easy prey to Satan, as we see in the case of the Apostle *Peter.* None but Jesus Christ the Captain of our Salvation, can bruise Satan under our feet, and cause us to triumph over him.

3. *JESUS CHRIST Enables them to Preach as they ought to do, both for matter and manner.* 'Tis by Him that they are enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge, *1 Cor. 1. 5.* Their furniture with knowledge in divine things is from Jesus Christ. He by His Spirit *leads them into all truth,* *Joh. 16. 13.* He enables them to understand the mysteries of the Gospel in order to the discharge of their Office. *From the holy Jesus they receive the unction,* even the Holy Spirit in his Gifts and Graces, whereby they are made to know all things necessary to their own Salvation, and the Salvation of those that hear them, *1 Joh. 2. 20.* Jesus Christ by His Spirit
assists

assists them in the investigation or finding out of Truths, so as not only to have a probable notion of them, but also a gracious satisfying assurance of the certainty thereof. And not only does He furnish their minds with just and right notions of Truth in general, but also sometimes directs & determines their thoughts to the most suitable Truths, and that in a very sovereign and surprizing manner: Hereby accommodating their Labours to the special unknown Circumstances of some that sit under their Ministry. 'Tis also by His powerful spiritual influences that their Preparations for the Sanctuary are at any time facilitated to them. Experience has undoubtedly taught us, that when Christ with-holds His assistance, our work goes on slowly and heavily, but when He lets forth His enlightening and enlarging influences it goes on sweetly and comfortably.

FURTHERMORE, it is the Lord Jesus Christ that enables His Ministers faithfully, affectionately and feelingly to deliver the Words of Truth prepared by them. From Him it is, that their utterance is animated with a moving compassion to the Souls of Men, and zealous concern for their Salvation, unto the Glory of GOD.

4. *JESUS CHRIST Enables them to Pray spiritually.* Right Prayer is a very spiritual work. 'Tis not a meer labour of the Lip and Brain, consisting in a vigorous exerting our natural powers, and exercising the Gifts of utterance, memory and invention. For all this may be

without the least spirituality in praying. But in right and acceptable prayer, there is an exercise of *spiritual sense* and a working of *spiritual affections*, so as really to discern the incomparable worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings, sensibly to feel an absolute need of them, and earnestly to desire a participation in them, that we may serve God, & be saved. Now it is Jesus Christ alone who thus enables us to pray, bestowing upon us the *Spirit of Grace & Supplication* according to his promise, *Zech. 12. 10.* By His Holy Spirit He *helps our infirmities*, giving us a more clear view of spiritual Blessings in their glory and greatness, and raising in our Souls most fervent and unutterable longings after a more full and sensible interest in them. *Rom. 8. 26.* This is that *praying in the Spirit* which is recommended to us as the only successful way of praying, *Eph. 6. 18.* *Jude 20.* When we have such special assistances from the Spirit of Christ, then will our prayer, both as to matter and manner, be according to the Mind of GOD, and shall assuredly receive a gracious answer from Him, *Rom. 8. 27.*

THUS much may suffice for the Doctrinal handling of the point. I now proceed to make Application thereof in two or three Words. I shall only give brief hints of things, which those that hear, need none of my enlargements upon.

A P P L I :

APPLICATION.

USE I. *WE hence see the exceeding Riches of the Grace of CHRIST, in so gloriously rewarding His Faithful Ministers in the World to come.* In this World, they many times seem to have little or nothing of a Reward. But in the future World, they shall receive a Reward exceeding great. *They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3. They shall receive a Crown of Righteousness or Holiness, 2 Tim. 4. 8. A Crown of Life, Rev. 2. 10. A Crown of Glory that fadeth not away, 2 Pet. 5. 4.* The Metaphors are exceeding lofty, yet fall far short of the thing itself, giving only an obscure Representation of what it shall be. For no Words, or Conceptions of Men, can reach the greatness of that Glory which Christ has prepared for His faithful Servants, and which He will give unto them, in that day when He shall come to be glorified in His Saints and admired in all them that Believe. Now, this most glorious Reward appears, from the Doctrine before us, to be an effect of the most glorious free Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis He that qualifies them for their Work, that enables them to their Work, and then rewards them for the doing of it. Christ gives the Qualifications, and then Recompenſes the Persons so qualified. Christ gives all the strength to do duty, and then rewards the Persons who do it by His strength. Is this the

manner of Man O Lord ! How marvellous is the Grace of Christ herein ! How should we adore the Grace of Christ in the *Promise* of such a glorious Reward ! and how humbly should we expect the *bestowment* of it upon us.

USE II. *WE are hence taught to whom we are to give the Glory of all Abilities unto Duty, observed in others, or experienced by ourselves, even to Jesus Christ our Lord.* To Him we are to give the Glory of all Ministerial abilities observed in others. 'Tis not to be given to Men, whatever they be or do. But the whole Glory is to be carried fully to Jesus Christ. We ought to give Men their due, to reverence their Gifts and Graces, to encourage them as there may be need, to respect them as Christ's Instruments, and labour to imitate them, but no further. We must let Christ lose nothing, who does all in them and by them. Jesus Christ is to be blessed for all the good that is to be seen in them and that is done by them. All their furniture for Service, and all their actual Serviceableness, is from Jesus Christ alone : and therefore the Crown is to be set on his head alone. Gal. 1. 24. *They glorified God in me.*

AGAIN, As for all ability unto Duty experienced by ourselves, we are to give all the Glory thereof unto Jesus Christ. We should be exceeding careful that we be not proud of parts or performances, arrogating that to ourselves which belongs to Jesus Christ. What have we that we have not freely received ?
What

What do we that we are not enabled to do by Jesus Christ? There is then no room left for boasting in ourselves, but our glorying should be in the Lord. The great Apostle Paul is a shining pattern to us in this case. How free was he from Self-Elation? If any Man had whereof to boast, he had more. Yet what Man was further off from glorying in himself than he? What Man was more studious to transfer all Glory from himself to Jesus Christ his Lord? In our Text and Context he ascribes to Jesus Christ all the Glory of his *call* to the Office of an Apostle, all the Glory of his *capacity* for, and *fidelity* in the discharge of that Office. His Soul is concerned that Christ alone might be exalted. And he magnifies the *Grace* of Christ to him, 1 Cor. 2. 25. I am—*one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.*

USE III. *THIS shows us to whom we are to apply ourselves, for all enablement unto the faithful discharge of our Duty, even to the Lord Jesus Christ.* To him must our Eye be for all Grace and Strength. Under a sense of our own Weakness we must have constant recourse unto Him. Our personal infirmities should carry us to Christ. This is the true and right use that is to be made of felt infirmities. We are not thereby to be disheartened, but be made more sensible of our need of His special assistance, and accordingly betake ourselves to Him for it.

AND we have the greatest *encouragement* to seek to Him, inasmuch as there is an allfulness of

of sufficiency in Him for this very end, that He might communicate thereof unto us. God in infinite Wisdom and Goodness, has put the stock of Grace into His Hands, to secure it for us and give it out unto us, as we may stand in daily need thereof, *Col. 1. 19.* And He will be true to the Office-trust His Father has reposed in Him.

MOREOVER, It is Christ's Work we are engaged in, and we may assure ourselves, that He will be no hard Master, requiring more of us, than He is willing to enable us unto. And to remove all suspicions in this case, He has left us His sure word of promise, that He will always be with us to strengthen us unto His Work, *Matb. 28. 19.*

BUT besides these gracious encouragements, there is also a *necessity* lying upon us, to go to Him for help and strength. For without His special assistance, 'tis impossible for us to do our work to God's Acceptance and our own Salvation. 'Tis possible, that we may please Men, and profit others, by the strength of natural and acquired parts, accompanied with meer common assistance. But we cannot please God, nor profit our own Souls; we can bring forth no good fruits whereby God shall be glorified and our Souls eternally saved, without special aids of Grace from Jesus Christ. See *John 15. 4, 5.* Who then will be unto us, if the Lord be not our very gracious helper. We cannot without fear and trembling intensely think of that most awful Scripture, *Mat. 7. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied*

propheſied in thy name ?—— It only remains that we conſider the *ſucceſſful Way* of going to Jeſus Chriſt for his ſpecial aſſiſtance.

And,

1. *WE muſt go to Chriſt in the Way of Prayer.* Common aſſiſtance may be had, without any prayer. But ſuch aſſiſtance, in ſuch a Way, cannot ſatiſfy us. But as for ſpecial aſſiſtance, whereby alone we ſerve Chriſt acceptably in the Goſpel, that will never be had without earneſt and importunate Prayer to Jeſus Chriſt. Heb. 4. 16. *Let us come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in a time of need.* The throne of Grace is here eſpecially aſſigned to GOD the Father, and Jeſus Chriſt is repreſented in the quality of a great high Prieſt making interceſſion at this throne : and conſequently we are directed to come to GOD the Father thro' the Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt, for all needed Grace. Yet this does not exclude Jeſus Chriſt from being the Object of our invocation, and the diſpenſer of the Graces we need. For in calling upon the Father as God, we do call upon Jeſus Chriſt who is the ſame God with the Father. And the Grace diſpenſed to us by the Father, is alſo diſpenſed to us by Jeſus Chriſt, who therein co-operates with the Father. John 5. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto and I work,* i. e. the ſame works together with Him. For, all eſſential works, ſuch as the works of nature, grace and glory, are equally done by the Father and the Son. And there-
fore

fore Jesus Christ says, John 14. 13, 14. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* Twice over He promises that *He Himself* will do it. Not the Father only, but He in Conjunction with the Father. We do therefore go to Christ and receive from Christ, in going to the Father and receiving from the Father in Christ's name. Yet however, sometimes we find the Servants of Christ explicitly and distinctly invoking His Person for needed Grace. Thus when He was on Earth, His Disciples, when they saw a need of having their Faith in Him strengthened, they prayed to Him and said, *Lord, increase our Faith*, Luke 17. 5. And after the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, the Apostle Paul under a sense of his need of relief and help, besought the Lord Jesus thrice, *that the messenger of Satan might depart from him*, 2 Cor. 12. 8. He betook himself to Christ by Prayer, and had a promise from Him that His Grace should be sufficient for him, though his Affliction, whatever it was, were not removed. And thus expressly to own and invoke the Lord Jesus Christ as the great God, the fountain and giver of all Grace, will be found a blessed method in our retirements for obtaining Communications of Grace from Him, by the Spirit of Grace that is in Him, John 4. 10. *Thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water.*

works of nature, grace and glory, and the Father and the Son. 2. WE

2. *WE must go to Christ, in Humility:* Bearing upon our minds an humble sense of our *unworthiness* to be employed by Him in the Work of the Ministry, to be improved and made use of in such special Service for His Great Name: His Grace herein is what we should most humbly adore, in such like exclamation as that of David, *Who am I O Lord God! and what is my house that thou hast brought me hitherto!* We should likewise humbly confess to Jesus Christ our own *insufficiency* for the Work we are called to, and humbly expect all Ability unto faithfulness from His *free Grace* alone. We must look to obtain *Mercy* of the Lord to be faithful. All imaginations of meriting more, by what we may have done already, are to be detested. Our hope from first to last is to be founded on the pure mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Applications to Him with such an humble frame of mind shall assuredly succeed: Jam. 4. 6. *He giveth grace to the humble: and will hear their Desire,* Psal. 10. 17.

3. *WE must go to Christ with the exercise of faith in Him for enablement to our work.* All special Grace and Assistance is conveyed to us from Christ, in the way of believing in Him. Joh. 7. 38, 39. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* This is not to be understood only of those miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, which were bestowed on many that did

did not truly believe on Jesus Christ, and were denied to many that *did* truly believe on Him. But it is especially to be understood of those sanctifying gifts and enlivening influences of the Spirit, which were granted only to real Believers on Christ. Those Graces and gracious influences are never bestowed, but in the way of Faith in Jesus Christ. There must then be in us an humble reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ, for the aids of His Holy Spirit, and all supplies of Grace. A Christ-depending frame of Heart is to be kept up in us, that we may have grace and strength communicated to us. This is what our Lord Himself especially directs us unto, in John 15. 4. *Abide in me, — as the Branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.* The Branch derives Juice from the Vine, in order to fruitfulness, by a constant, close adherence to the Vine; So do we derive strength from Christ by constant dependance upon Him. We should therefore frequently renew acts of Faith and trust in Jesus Christ for renewed supplies of Grace. We stand in daily need of Christ; in every duty we are called to engage in, we need his help: and therefore we should have our daily dependance upon Him for His holy assistance. The Branch brings not forth fruit by the Sap communicated to it one day, but by daily fresh communications thereof. No more can we, without continued new assistances from Jesus Christ, do any thing as we ought. Upon Him therefore must the whole dependence

bestowed upon us. A thankful Soul, shall have more to be thankful for.

5. *WE must go to Christ in the way of diligent Study.* We may not expect immediate inspiration, as the Apostles had, so as not to need to think beforehand, what we should say upon any occasion. All gracious assistance comes in, only in the actings of diligence. To neglect our Studies, and yet to hope that Christ will help us, will be found in us the most aggravated Presumption. We must therefore be in the use of all means, even, private readings and meditations ; especially studying the holy Scriptures, which are our only rule and guide in all our work. In this way of painful Study, we may hope to be more and more enriched with all Gifts & Graces. This is the course which the Apostle directs *Timothy* unto, in order to his proficiency in spiritual Gifts and Abilities, 1 Tim. 4. 13, 15. *Give attendance to reading, meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.* In this case that will be found a Truth, Prov. 10. 4. *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

6. *WE must go to Christ with a sincere regard to His Glory:* Propounding that as the great end of our desiring assistance from Him. The best Gifts are earnestly to be coveted, and all needful aids are fervently to be requested, yet not to set off ourselves, but Jesus Christ. The Honour and Glory of our great Lord and Master

Master is to be made the principal end of our ambition to excell in Ministerial abilities. We must desire to receive from Him, with an upright intention to employ all for Him. This is the great end of Christ, in all those privileges, Gifts and Graces which He bestows upon us, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* And as this is the great end of Christ in giving Gifts to Men, so it should be our great end in asking Gifts of Him. They are to be sought, as qualifications for His Service, that we may be the more active instruments of His Glory. We should always bear it upon our Minds, that there are none among the Sons of Men, who have such special advantages and opportunities, and who are under such peculiar obligations, to advance the Glory of Christ, as those that are called to be His Ministers. And their true Work, if they understand it, is to labour *that Christ may be magnified in them whether by life or death*, Phil. 1. 20, 21. There should then be in us, an Heart bound and set for the Glory of Christ: and all our desires of Grace and Help from Him, should be in order to the attaining this most excellent and divine End. And when they are sincerely desired, as necessary means unto this *designed* end, they shall most assuredly be granted. Jesus Christ, for the Glory of His own Name, will fulfil the desires of our Souls. So shall we

we be found faithful in His Service, and so shall we be found among the Number of those blessed Servants, unto whom He shall say at the great Day of His appearing, Well done, ye good and faithful Servants, enter ye into the Joy of your Lord. Amen.



FINIS.

How great Ministers Work
To speak of Things unspeakable
To open Things inexplicable
To do Things impossible
To deal with God for Man
To deal with Man for God



